

Message Text

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TAGS: OREP (INOUE, DANIEL), XF, PINS

SUBJ: CODEL INOUE MEETING RE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES WITH
IDF GENERAL VARDI

1. SUMMARY: GENERAL RAPHAEL VARDI, " COORDINATOR
OF OPERATIONS IN ADMINISTERED AREAS," IN JANUARY 27
MEETING WITH SENATORS INOUE AND MATHIAS, REVIEWED ISRAELI
POLICY IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, EMPHASIZING THAT MILITARY
GOVERNMENT SOUGHT TO ACHIEVE BALANCE BETWEEN NON-INTERVENTION
IN LOCAL ARAB AFFAIRS AND PROTECTION OF ISRAELI SECURITY INTERESTS.
VARDI ASSESSED IDF SECURITY PRACTICES, INCLUDING ADMINISTRATIVE
DETENTION, EXPULSION, AND BLOWING UP OF HOUSES,
AS DETERRENT ACTIONS WHICH WERE PREFERABLE TO ADOPTION
OF MORE SEVERE MEASURES. CODEL EXPRESSED ITS DEEP
DISSATISFACTION WITH GOI REFUSAL TO ALLOW IT TO VISIT WEST BANK
REFUGEE CAMP ON SECURITY GROUNDS. END SUMMARY.

2. GENERAL RAFAEL VARDI, " COORDINATOR OF OPERATIONS IN
ADMINISTERED AREAS," BRIEFED CODEL JANUARY 27 ON GOI POLICY
IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES BASED ON FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:
(A) MAINTENANCE OF LOW MILITARY PROFILE, (B) NON-INTERVENTION
IN LOCAL AFFAIRS, (C) GUARANTEE OF FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT,
EMPLOYMENT, TRADE AND SPEECH AND (D) PROTECTION OF ISRAELI
SECURITY REQUIREMENTS.

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3. SECURITY CONTROL. VARDI SAID THAT IDF EMPLOYED THREE METHODS OF SECURITY CONTROL: ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION, EXPULSION, AND BLOWING UP OF HOUSES. HE STRESSED THAT THESE WERE DETERRENT MEASURES DESIGNED TO MINIMIZE TERRORIST ACTIVITY AIMED AGAINST BOTH JEWS AND ARABS NOTING THAT 400 ISRAELIS AND 150 ARABS HAD DIED SINCE 1967 AS RESULT OF TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. VARDI ALSO STRESSED THAT ABOVE METHODS WERE PREFERABLE TO APPLICATION OF HARSHER PENALTIES SUCH AS DEATH SENTENCE OR LONG PRISON TERMS.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION. VARDI STATED THAT IDF NOW WAS HOLDING 76 PERSONS IN ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION-36 FROM WEST BANK, 13 FROM EAST JERUSALEM AND REMAINDER PRESUMABLY FROM GAZA STRIP. HE EXPLAINED THAT ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION IS APPLIED FOR UP TO SIX MONTHS WITH POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER EXTENSIONS. WHILE PROCEDURE DOES'NT GO THROUGH ISRAELI JUDICIAL SYSTEM, MINISTER OF DEFENSE PERSONALLY APPROVES EACH CASE INCLUDING TIME PERIOD OF DETENTION. IDF APPLIES ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION ONLY IN CASES IN WHICH THERE IS SECURITY RISK BUT SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE IS LACKING TO BRING PERSON TO TRIAL. VARDI SAID THAT MOST DETAINEES AT PRESENT ARE FROM JORDANIAN COMMUNIST PARTY AND NATIONAL PALESTINIAN FRONT.

5. CODEL STATED THAT RED CROSS AND ARAB SOURCES CLAIMED THAT GOI WAS HOLDING ABOUT 2,300-2,400 ADMINISTRATIVE DETAINEES. VARDI CATEGORICALLY DENIED THIS. HE SAID THAT IN 1968-69 THERE HAD BEEN 700 DEAINES AND IN 1973 ONLY ONE. NUMBER HAD AGAIN INCREASED AS A RESULT OF OCTOBER 2-4. SENATOR INOUE IN REPLY EXPRESSED HIS AMAZEMENT AT LOW IDF PROFILE AND SAID THAT UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES HE WOULD HAVE EXPECTED LARGER NUMBER OF DETAINEES. (COMMENT: WE ASSUME CONFUSION OVER NUMBERS HAS ARISEN BY FAILURE IN BRIEFING TO DIFERENTIATE BETWEEN TOTAL NUMBER OF ARAB PRISONERS AND THOSE HELD UNDER ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION. FIGURE CITED ABOVE BY CODEL IS VERY CLOSE TO ICRC ESTIMATE OF PRISONERS AS REPORTED JERUSALEM 0073.)

6 EXPULSIONS. VARDI STATED THAT SINCE 1967 IDF HAD EXPELLED 84 PEOPLE. HE CLAIMED THAT ALL OF THEM WANTED TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. VARDI CLAIMED, FOR INSTANCE, CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT FORMER MAYOR OF RAMALLAH (EXPELLED IN 1969 AND SUBSEQUENTLY GOJ MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION, HAD INDICATED THAT HE WAS EVEN PREPARED TO SERVE JAIL SENTENCE IF HE WOULD BE ALLOWED TO RETURN.

7. HANNA NASSER CASE. SENATOR INOUE ASKED GENERAL VARDI TO SUBMIT MEMORANDUM ON CASE OF DR. HANNA NASSER, PRESIDENT OF BIR ZEIT COLLEGE, WHO HAD BEEN RECENTLY EXPELLED.

HE TOLD VARDI THAT DR. NASSER WOULD SOON BE IN US AND WOULD DOUBTLESS CHARGE IDF WITH DEPRIVATION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES AND FORCED EXPULSION. VARDI IN REPLY SAID THAT ONCE NASSER REALIZED THAT GOI WOULD NOT ALLOW HIM TO RETURN, HE WOULD OPENLY EXPRESS HIS AFFILIATION WITH PLO. I ANSWER TO QUESTION, VARDI THEN SPECIFIED THAT GOI BELIEVED NASSER BELONGED TO PFLP. MFA OFFICIALS AT BRIEFING TOLD CODEL THAT THEY WOULD PROVIDE MOMORANDUM REQUESTED.

8. BLOWING UP OF BUILDINGS. VARDI STATED THAT IDF PRACTICE OF BLOWING UP HOUSES OCCURRED ONLY IN CASES OF SPECIFIC TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. MOST OF THESE HOUSES HAD BEEN RECONSTRUCTED.

9. REFUGEE CAMPS. VARDI SAID THAT THERE WERE 310,000 REFUGEES IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, OF WHOM 65,000 LIVED IN 19 CAMPS ON WEST BANK AND 170,000 LIVED IN 8 CAMPS IN GAZA STRIP. UNRWA SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES HAD BECOME MARGINAL ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS. AVERAGE INCOME OF GAZA STRIP WAGE EARNERS WAS IL 750.00 A MONTH, A SUM WHICH OBIATED NEED FOR RELIEF.

10 GAZA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROJECT.
VARDI SAID THAT MAIN PROBLEM OF GAZA STRIP REFUGEES WAS HOUSING. GOI HAD PLANS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF 19 HOUSING QUARTERS OF 1,000 UNITS EACH; FOUR QUARTERS OF 1,200 UNITS HAD ALAADY BEEN BUILT. OVERALL COST OF PROJECTED HOUSING WAS ONE BILLION ISRAELI POUNDS. ORIGINAL GOAL HAD BEEN TO COMPLETE HOUSING REDEVELOPMENT OVER SEVEN YEARS, BUT PAST WAR AUSTERITY REQUIREMENTS HAD FORCED GOI TO SLOW DOWN PACE OF CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY.

11. CODEL VISIT TO WEST BANK. AT END OF BRIEFING, SENATOR INOUE STATED THAT CODEL HAD MADE FIVE REQUESTS TO GOI FOR PERMISSION TO VISIT WEST BANK REFUGEE CAMPS. AFTER
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NOTING THAT REQUESTS HAD BEEN DENIED FOR SECURITY REASONS, INOUE ASKED VARDI FOR EXPLANATION. VARDI APOLOGIZED, SAID SUGGESTED CODEL VISITS TO BOTH WEST BANK AND GAZA. EMBASSY OFFICER MADE IT CLEAR THAT MFA HAD INFORMED EMBASSY THAT CODEL COULD NOT VISIT WEST BANK FOR SECURITY REASONS. DAFNI, MFA OFFICER WHO CONVEYED THIS INFORMATION TO EMBASSY, WAS PRESENT DURING THIS EXCHANGE, BUT UNCHARACTERISTICALLY SILENT. VELIOTES

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